

# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

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## **CoC Bi-Monthly Meeting**

May 30, 2017 10:00AM  
Human Services Building  
One Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh.

**Purpose:** The Homeless Advisory Board (HAB) is a public/private partnership formed to assist and recommend to Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, the City of McKeesport and the Municipality of Penn Hills on public policy, programs, activities, data and all other efforts that will eliminate homelessness and improve the wellbeing of persons and families who are homeless.

### **HAB Members\***

Frank Aggazio, ACHA	Abigail Horn, ACDHS
Meg Balsamico, Penn Hills	Linda Kilderry
Caster Binion, HACP	Anna Kudrov, Pgh Police (P)
Diana Bucco, Buhl	Joe Lagana, HCEF (P)
Jerry Cafardi, DCP	John Lovelace, UPMC (P)
Tom Cummings, URA (P)	Lenny Prewitt, Familylinks
Sean DeYoung, PATF (P)	Richard Ranii, All. Co. Economic Development (P)
Jane Downing, Pittsburgh Foundation (P)	Chris Roach, OSN (P)
Marlon Ferguson, Veterans Place	Amy Snider, ACTION Housing (P)
Pete Giacalone, WPIC (P)	Adrienne Walnoha, CHS (P)
	Bethany Wingerson, Center for Victims (P)

### **Guest Attendees**

Dinita Benjamin, Familylinks	D. Linhart, Beth Haven
Laura Drogowski, Mayor's Office	Jessica McKown, DHS
Rob Eamigh, DHS	Kaitlyn Nykwest, HCEF
Trey Goff, Women's Center and Shelter	Emil Pyptyk, DHS
Jessica Gorgas	Richard Rapp
John Gurken	Diana Reichembach, Goodwill of SW PA
Andy Halfhill, DHS	Kelly Russell, City of Pgh
Peter Harvey, DHS	Barb Smith, HEARTH
Kate Holko, DHS	Sally Stadelman, Mayor's Office
Chuck Keenan, DHS	Liz D. Totten, City of Pgh
Lisa Kessler, DHS	Pat Valentine, DHS
Terri Laver, DHS	Maria Wallace, DHS

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\* (P) indicates that the HAB member participated in the meeting.

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## Minutes

### **1. Welcome & Review of Meeting Minutes—John Lovelace**

- The March 2017 meeting minutes were approved.
- HAB members also reviewed their schedules and confirmed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, July 25, 2017.
- John Lovelace announced the appointment of Anna Kudrov to the HAB and welcomed Anna.
- Anna Kudrov spoke briefly about her background, especially her experience with people experiencing homelessness.

### **2. Infrastructure Organization Report and HUD CoC NOFA- Rob Eamigh**

Rob Eamigh shared updates on the NOFA. He announced that the CoC received UFA status. With UFA status, the CoC will have the flexibility to shift funds between grants and will receive additional funding for administration (1.5% of the current allocation, totaling \$258,374). Rob anticipates that we will receive more detail around what the CoC's UFA designation will entail upon release of the NOFA. The NOFA will have two tiers of funding, with grants in Tier 2 at highest risk of not receiving funding. He does not know the threshold for Tier 1 vs. Tier 2. Last year, 7% of the total budget had to fall under Tier 2. The current grant inventory is \$17,224,974. A total of 60 programs will apply for renewals in the upcoming NOFA, 44 PSH and 16 RRH. Renewals will also include two HMIS grants and one grant for the Link. If allowable in the NOFA, the CoC will apply for a planning grant. The CoC will reallocate funding from three programs who gave up their funding (\$256,735) and underspent funding from last year (\$119,000). DHS issued an RFP to identify a provider to provide a program with reallocated funding. DHS received responses to the RFP and an evaluation committee is reviewing responses. DHS is recommending that the HAB place the program funded with reallocated dollars in Tier 2. The HAB will need to vote on the placement of reallocated projects.

Rob provided an update on state funding that DHS receives for housing assistance for people who are experiencing homelessness. DHS receives \$730,000 in Penn Free funding for housing for people who are experiencing homelessness and have a history of unhealthy substance use. DHS issued an RFP to provide Penn Free housing and selected a provider, Chartiers Center, to provide the program, starting on July 1. DHS also issued an RFP for Family Emergency Shelter in the spring and received no responses. DHS is actively working on an interim plan.

Rob noted that DHS has begun monitoring providers using a new and improved monitoring tool. The tool emphasizes housing first principles, HMIS data quality, performance outcomes and increased case management.

### **3. Quality Control Measures for the CoC Scoring—Andy Halfhill**

Andy Halfhill explained that the CoC scores projects so that there is a methodology behind ranking projects in the NOFA, to assist with identifying lower performing projects that should be a part of reallocation decisions and to continue to better understand how the system is performing. The CoC Analysis and Planning Committee developed the tool and the HAB approved the tool. With the tool, scoring is more consistent, uniform and fair. While the process is data-driven, the tool allows some flexibility for provider input/justifications. The metrics for evaluations are based on HUD guidance and local input. This year the CoC has designated 3 groups of projects:

- Evaluated projects active all of 2016 using data from HMIS/DHS sources pulled on March 7, 2016
- Evaluated projects active part of 2016 using data pulled from HMIS/DHS sources pulled April 3, 2017 and assigned full points where there was incomplete data
- New projects that had not started were not evaluated; will use scores from RFP

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process

DHS developed a dashboard tool (using Tableau software) to generate numbers used to populate the scorecards using data that providers entered into HMIS.

Andy outlined the scorecard completion process and quality control measures, noting that it is important to remember that this is the first year using the tool. On the excel worksheet, DHS staff checked formulas several times, then locked down spreadsheets. DHS developed a data manual/calculations guide and made the following adjustments:

- Omitted “disabling condition” and “Residential Move in Date” from HMIS data quality scoring
- Adjusted data quality scoring
- Added clarity to the “Cost per” section

Four DHS staff reviewed the scorecard multiple times. DHS delayed sending out scoresheets by one week to ensure proper quality control and then delayed an extra two days for final checks. DHS sent out scoresheets to providers with the instruction that DHS would not change scores unless providers found errors. Andy received good feedback for next year. DHS is willing to provide underlying HMIS data to providers (as needed) as well as updated numbers to the evaluation committee if requested. The CoC Analysis and Planning Committee will consider modifications to the tool for next year that improve its quality.

Richard Ranii added that we should let providers know when they are failing in their efforts around HMIS, perhaps by providing an interim report card.

Andy Halfhill noted that we recently developed a data quality report and received feedback from providers that the report is helpful.

Kate Holko added that Jessica McKown has joined DHS staff to look at data quality in HMIS.

#### **4. Discussion on the Draft Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness—Jane Downing**

Jane Downing updated the HAB on the status of the plan. She and Joe Lagana are working on compiling and simplifying feedback from committees. The goal of the plan is to create a system that makes homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. She thanked everyone who participated in the committee review of the draft plan. She received responses from 12 committees, mostly affiliates of the HAB. Approximately 100 people reviewed the plan and provided comments, including individuals from the City. She has arranged for three town hall meetings, on June 7, 8 and 9, respectively. So far, the feedback is that people generally agree with the components of the plan and recommended strategies. When asked to rank the priorities, the top priority is to increase supply and access to affordable housing for people who are experiencing homelessness. Jane asked the HAB for their reaction to the initiatives and strategies for improving the initiatives, as outlined in a handout they received at the beginning of the meeting.

John Lovelace asked what is the next step in the process?

Jane Downing said that she is meeting with the Mayor and County Executive this afternoon to go over the draft projects. Some may involve capital expenditures, like the year round low barrier shelter. DHS is planning on issuing an RFP to find a planning partner to figure out how to best design and implement the low-barrier shelter. To design the shelter, we will need input from the mayor’s office and potentially a workgroup of providers.

Chris Roach suggested that the low-barrier shelter concept remain broad in the draft plan.

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Adrienne Walnoha added that the plan should highlight and be driven by best practices.

Jane Downing said that due to the length of the plan, she asked the consultants to make the best practice piece a supplement.

Adrienne Walnoha suggested that a priority recommendation be to identify and implement best practice.

Amy Snider said that the CoC Planning and Communication and Education Committees met together to discuss the draft plan. The group was divided in identifying the top priority and struggled to determine if preventing homelessness or serving those who were currently homeless was more important.

A HAB Member suggested that a priority be to help RRH providers who are in startup mode.

Jane Downing talked about increasing the supply and access to affordable housing. This may require financial resources and identifying which neighborhoods need the units. She talked about outreach services- the concept is to expand outreach. The HOCC has been working on this and has a set of priorities in place to do this work. If we cannot get additional funding, we need to figure out if we are willing to shift around existing resources to make sure this happens.

Adrienne Walnoha asked for more definition around the term outreach.

Chris Roach said that there is not enough focus on street outreach outside of Pittsburgh. We need to expand street outreach to cover the CoC's entire geographic area.

Jane Downing noted that there are new partnerships with Pittsburgh Public Schools and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to pilot programs to increase the efficiency with which schools transport children who are experiencing homelessness to their home school district.

Richard Ranii noted that it seems that we are going to be thinking about preventing and addressing homelessness at the same time. It is difficult to prioritize one or the other.

Adrienne Walnoha noted that the evaluation piece is not addressed in the plan.

Jane Downing encouraged everyone to attend the public meetings and thanked those who have worked on the plan so far. The city recommends that we explain what this effort does for people. The communication committee could work on this.

The HAB requested public comment on the plan.

Joe Lagana commented that the quality of input into the plan was outstanding and will push us forward in the right direction.

An attendee asked: What monitoring process will be put in place to make sure that we are on track with the plan?

Jane said that the monitoring is yet to be determined.

Adrienne Walnoha asked if there were any extra resources allocated to the planning process that could be used for monitoring?

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Jane Downing said that she sent the draft plan to a group of funders and did not receive feedback. It is possible that individual foundations may be interested in supporting some projects.

Barb Smith asked where preventing people from becoming homeless through skill or workforce development fit in the plan.

Jane Downing said that workforce development fits in the last system integration piece. There are approximately 80 nonprofits that have some facet of workforce development in the area, 16 or 17 of which focus solely on workforce development but most of the others are associated with human service agencies that provide work readiness skills.

Richard Rapp stressed that living on the street is a very different lifestyle that destroys people's hope and makes it difficult for them to adapt to living off of the streets.

Joe Lagana noted that we must put this plan into context of what is happening on the federal level.

Terri Laver added that there will be a point in time count this summer. Providers should make sure that their data is up to date in HMIS so that DHS can pull their numbers on July 25. Chris Roach is going to be coordinating an intense effort to county the homeless on the streets through the HOCC. The YouthCount will be happening at the same time.

### 5. Public Comment/Announcements

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#### **Next CoC Meeting**

Tuesday, May 30, 2017—10:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
Human Services Building  
One Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh